SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Special libraries are a strong component of North Carolina's information infrastructure. Besides service to their primary clienteles, they are active in resource-sharing and other programs benefiting library users and libraries of all types in the state. There are about 150 special libraries in North Carolina, divided into three general groups: government, corporate/research and academic special. All three types are found in the greatest concentration in the Research Triangle (Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh and the Research Triangle Park). Other important clusters are in the Piedmont Triad (Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem) and Metrolina (the eleven-county area including and surrounding Charlotte/Mecklenburg).

Special libraries submit reports to the State Library. Their resources - cataloged books (and other items cataloged in the same manner as books) and serials - have grown as follows:

	1980/81	1983/83
Books and other cataloged items	3,093,550	3,656,275
Serials	74,128	77,798

For 1980/81 special libraries reported 275.9 professional librarians in full-time equivalents and 431.5 support staff members. Those figures grew by 11% and 6% respectively, to 306.2 librarians and 458.5 support staff in 1983/84. The total size of special libraries' primary user groups increased from 931,062 to 965,756 over the same time period.

North Carolina has an active state chapter of the Special Libraries Association, with a solid program of seminars and other continuing education events. One of the NC-SLA committees is consultation, to give expert advice and assistance in establishing, maintaining and strengthening special libraries' services. A recent project of the Consultation Committee has been to target new businesses in North Carolina. The chapter publishes a quarterly bulletin, of which the 1987 directory issue listed 200 members.

It appears that governmental and academic special libraries are in a more stable environment than corporate libraries. External forces such as mergers, buy-outs and relocations and internal forces such as the strength of data processing operations create a more volatile setting